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Here is a brief account of the espionage cases that began to unravel last year:

Feb. 21 _ Larry Wu-tai Chin, 63, committed suicide while awaiting sentencing on his Feb. 7 conviction of passing secrets to China for more than 30 years. Chin, a retired midlevel analyst for the CIA, was arrested Nov. 23.

Feb. 13 _ Jury selection begins in the second trial of Richard W. Miller, a 20-year FBI veteran accused of conspiring to commit espionage for the Soviet Union. His first trial ended Nov. 6 with a deadlocked jury. Miller, 35, was accused of conspiring with two Soviet emigres, Nikolay Ogorodnikov, 52, and his wife Svetlana, who pleaded guilty last June. He received an eight-year sentence and she received an 18-year term. Miller and the Ogorodnikovs were arrested on Oct. 3, 1984.

Jan. 23 _ Randy Miles Jeffries, a 26-year-old worker at a Washington stenographic firm that does U.S. government work, pleaded guilty to giving classified national security documents to the Soviets. Jeffries was arrested Dec. 20.

Jan. 22 _ Air Force Airman 1st Class Bruce D. Ott arrested in Davis, Calif., for attempting to pass national defense information to an unidentified nation. Ott, 25, of Erie, Pa., was working as an administrative clerk with a unit that operates the super-secret SR-71 spy planes.

Dec. 24 _ Ronald Pelton, 44, a communications specialist for the National Security Agency, pleaded innocent to charges of selling the Soviets information on U.S. intelligence gathering. He was arrested Nov. 24 in Annapolis, Md. He is scheduled to stand trial March 24.

Dec. 4 _ Samuel Loring Morison, 40, a Naval intelligence analyst, was sentenced to two years in prison for giving the British military journal, Jane's Defense Weekly, three classified photographs of a Soviet nuclear aircraft carrier under construction (TEXT OMITTED FROM SOURCE).